

## GABRIEL AND HIS ADVENTURES.

### CHAPTER I.

#### THE HERMIT.



HAVE you ever seen a mountain so tall that the clouds rest on the top? Well, on a mountain like that, and something the shape of a sugar-loaf, there once lived an old man. On one side was the beautiful blue sea, with the great waves roaring on the yellow sand; on the other, with its thousands of chimneys, lay the noble city called Sugar Loaf Town, nestling at the foot of the huge mountain from whence it took its name, and which protected it from many an angry blast.

The old man dwelt alone in a dark and narrow cave, for no one cared to visit him; his only companions were his goats and the sea-gulls, and his chief occupation the perusal of his books, and the care of a small garden that he had cultivated on a sunny slope of the hill. Many ships sailed from that great city under the mountain, and there were cruel rocks, hidden by the water, on which the ships were driven by the wind,\* when the nights were too dark for the sailors to see the land. It grieved the old man, whom we will call the Hermit, to see the fine ships broken to pieces, and the bodies of the poor drowned sailors lying on the beach; and anxious to save them, if possible, this good man lighted a fire, night after night, upon the mountain-side to warn away the mariners from the dangerous spot. One day, to the great surprise of the Hermit, he found a little boy, about two years old, lying on the rock outside the door of the cave, beautifully clothed in white, and with a large diamond hung round his neck. This jewel shone with dazzling splendour, and the face of the child was so lovely that the Hermit exclaimed, "Surely this babe is an angel from heaven, sent to comfort my lonely hours!"

As an angel from heaven the old man loved the child; and he named him Gabriel. Years passed on, and the child grew into a brave and beautiful boy. He called the Hermit father, and never knew that he was not his real father.

The Hermit was a wise and learned man, and he taught Gabriel all

the wisdom and knowledge that he had gathered together during the years of his life. Gabriel was fond of his lessons, but he loved above all things to watch the ships, as they went to and fro with their white sails spread like the sea-gulls' wings, and he was seized with a great longing to sail away in one of those ships and visit the countries that lay across the sea. Then the boy would marvel that his father could rest so contentedly on the mountain top, without caring to visit the great city and the busy world below. At last he spoke the thought that had burned in his heart for many a day.

"Father, tell me," said the boy, "why we live upon the mountain far away from the rest of men?"

"It is safe up here," replied the Hermit, gravely.

"Safe, father! Safe from what?"

"From the influence of the wicked Magician who holds that unhappy town in bondage."

"Oh, father, is there danger in the town? I should so like to visit it. May I not go some day?"

"Gabriel," said the Hermit, laying his hand upon the boy's arm, as if to restrain his restless spirit, "listen, whilst I tell you the story of that city. I once lived there, in the days of good King Adrian; then the Magician had no power for evil, his influence was thwarted and destroyed by the wisdom and goodness of our king; but when Adrian died, the Magician dazzled the eyes of the people with his splendour and magnificent promises; they accepted him as their king, and the reign of evil began. There was no safety in the town, all fell beneath his yoke; and I rose betimes and fled up the mountain. Above a certain level we are safe and free. Oh, Gabriel, be warned in time; sigh not for the restless life of the world below, and think not that your strength is sufficient to resist the powers of magic which will surely overcome you if you fall within their reach."

A cloud of disappointment rested on Gabriel's brow. After a minute's silence, during which he was gazing eagerly at the forbidden town, he said, "Show me at least, dear father, the line of the level where the Magician's power ceases. Surely I can stand on the edge without harm, and get a nearer view of the city?"

"Nay, Gabriel," replied the Hermit, shaking his head, "I cannot point out the exact spot where you would be safe; there is no fixed line where good begins and evil stops; but it varies as men's

characters vary, and it rises and falls according to the strength and the weakness of each."

Gabriel said no more about descending to the town, but he wearied of his mountain life; his longing for adventure grew wilder and wilder, and he brooded day and night upon the thought, till his desire became a madness, and his longing a frenzy.

## CHAPTER II.

### "THE TORTOISESHELL CAT."

THE Hermit was weeding his garden-beds; Gabriel had finished his lessons; he turned away from the books with a weary sigh, the blue sea smiled in the sunshine, and murmured enticingly. He threw open his arms, as if to embrace it, and with a sudden, wild gesture turned and tore down the mountain, onward, onward, to the great town.

Breathless, and half frightened at what he had done, he stood in the noisy streets for the first time in his life. It was not possible that he could escape the notice of the Magician; a new subject had entered his realm, and how quickly was that poor soul enslaved! Impelled by a new and irresistible influence, Gabriel soon reached the docks where the gallant ships lay side by side. He had thought just to explore the town and go back again; but, alas! he was driven on, away from the dear old Hermit, to whom he would never return.

Gabriel was a tall, handsome young fellow, and as he looked with eager, curious eyes at the beautiful vessels before him, a man caught him by the arm, saying: "Why, you're just the fellow I want, a fine young sailor——"

"I'm no sailor," replied Gabriel, "but I am ready to be one."

"Come along, then, in my ship, 'The Tortoiseshell Cat:' we sail to-night, at the turn of the tide."

Gabriel hesitated: he thought of the old man alone on the mountain.

"Look here," said the Sea Captain, bringing out a handful of gold, "plenty of money and good food I promise you."

"I do not care for money, sir. I want to see the strange lands that lie across the sea."

"Ho, ho, my fine bird!" cried the Captain, slapping Gabriel on the back, "I'll show you strange countries, such as you never dreamt of. I will take you to lands where flowers spring up beneath your feet,

and the trees drop fruit into your mouth, and the monkeys throw diamonds into your pockets, and—but come along, see for yourself; your hair would grow white before I could tell all that these eyes have seen.”

The Captain led the way into “The Tortoiseshell Cat;” Gabriel followed, dumb with surprise, and his heart on fire at the thought of seeing these marvels with his own eyes.

The ship was cleared, and the sailors wound up the anchor to the gay sea-song of—

Heave away, boys, heave away with a will,  
There’s a good breeze coming our sails to fill.

Gabriel, you may be sure, worked the hardest and sang the loudest of any. The sails were unfurled, and puffed and swelled in the breeze; the west wind whistled in the ropes, where the men ran up and down like monkeys, and before the sun had set “The Tortoiseshell Cat” was bowing and curtsying over the waves, past the mountain, and past the cave where the old man sat alone, wondering when Gabriel would return.

Everything seemed strange and beautiful to Gabriel as the brave ship sailed on, and he had so many questions to ask that his companions grew tired of answering him. Sometimes at night the sea looked like a sheet of fire, and sparks danced up and down the waves. “What can be the matter?” thought Gabriel; “are the fish having a bonfire?” But the sailors laughed, and said that the sparks of fire were little animals that ran about the water with lighted lamps upon their heads. Gabriel liked to lean over the side of the ship, and watch the fish as they swam about. The water was so clear that he could see a long way down, and fine games they had—Follow my Leader, Tom Tiddler’s Ground, Leap-frog; and one day Gabriel saw a mischievous little fish twist a piece of seaweed round an old cod’s eyes, and such a scrimmage followed that he was sure it was meant for Blind Man’s Buff.

“Ha, ha, ha!” shouted Gabriel, and he laughed so loud that the fish went off in a hurry, and he leaned so far over the ship’s side to look after the old cod, as he blundered off with the seaweed round his head, that he lost his balance, and with a heavy splash fell into the sea. But, alas! he was worse off than his friends the fish; for, unlike them, he could not swim, and down to the bottom, like a stone, sank the

unhappy Gabriel. He opened his mouth to scream, but the water ran in and choked him, and horrid animals flapped their tails in his face, and stared at him with their goggle eyes. He fancied that he heard the voices of the sailors shouting and calling him by name, but so faint and distant was the sound, that he knew he must have fallen to the bottom of the sea.

At that moment, as the water of death appeared to be closing over his head, the thought of the old man he had so cruelly left, and all his disregarded warnings and entreaties, came back to him. Truth drew closer and closer to his eyes, and grew each moment clearer and brighter, like a star seen through a telescope, with the intervening mists of this world's atmosphere cleared away. He knew then, for the first time, that he had fallen a victim to the power of the Magician. Oh, if he might but return to the world above the sea, he would have but one wish, but one struggle—to fly from the land of magic and return to the Hermit's side.

"There's a queer-looking creature!" cried a mermaid, as she sat on a coral bank, combing her long, wet hair, and gently waving her tail as a well-educated young lady waves her fan. "Well, to be sure, it has no tail," she continued, scornfully, "only two stupid stumps; and it tumbles about like a log of wood!"

"It's a man," said the sole, as she lay half-buried in the mud with her one eye upwards. "He's tumbled out of a ship; it's a pity he should come here to die!"

Where the sole got her knowledge from is a mystery; but she was a good old sole, and placing her flat body under the fainting Gabriel, gradually bore him to the surface. The water was buzzing in his ears, but he heard the Captain give a cheery shout, and felt him grasp his arm; then he remembered no more till he found himself lying on the deck, and the sailors standing round.

"Well, you are a stupid fellow," said the mate, "to tumble overboard and swim like a lump of lead. If our good captain had not jumped into the water and brought you out, you would have been food for the fishes to-night."

Now, considering that the sole had not only sprained her right fin in raising Gabriel out of the water, but deprived herself of a magnificent supper, you will agree with me that she was a very good old sole indeed, and deserved a medal from the Humane Society.

When Gabriel had perfectly recovered his senses, he was rejoiced to find that a change had passed over him ; the power of the Magician had fallen off from him, and lay doubtless at the bottom of the deep. His desire to return to the Hermit knew no abatement ; but how was it to be accomplished ? Not yet, Gabriel ; not yet, for many a year, can you escape from the course of life upon which you wilfully embarked ; but remain steadfast and true of heart, and all may yet be well.

(To be continued.)

## WALTER JOSEPH ; OR, THE NAME REGAINED.

(Continued.)



IN the morning light, his wish to discover the secret spring, and the retreat of the old cavalier, grew stronger than ever. Many a time on that day, and the next, and the next, did he search, and peep, and feel over every portion of the wall within his reach. He tried, however, in vain, during these days, to discover the spring of which he was sure Hannah had spoken. On the morning of the fourth day, as he lay in bed, he began again. Carefully pinning a piece of twine by its two ends to the walls, he made his fingers pace along it, pressing every inch of the way. He repeated this process all along the wall by his bedside, but quite in vain ; the solid oak panelling seemed to mock all his attempts to get behind it. Then he began to rap, but he was afraid lest the noise might attract notice, therefore this he dared not continue. So he lay back on his pillow, considering, and gazing at the obstinate, provoking wall before him. At length he became conscious of watching a beetle climbing along it. It was unlike his foreign beetles, and he watched it with interest. It approached the edge of the panel, crawled along it, and very close to the beveled border. Just then a noise near his door made him hastily snatch down his twine, and turn to see who had made it. It must have been the housemaid passing, no one was coming in. So he turned back to watch his beetle,—it was gone ; crawled, he supposed, under the border.

Now Walter Joseph had no mind to be baffled : he chose to see where the beetle was, and bring it out, where he could watch it. So seizing his knife out of his trousers-pocket, he proceeded to lift the

border to dig out his beetle. He found the spot, and inserted the point of his knife. He was pressing upon it with all his might, when he felt the wall yield,—and *inwards!* The conviction burst upon him that he had lit upon the spring. Excited beyond measure, he pressed as hard as he possibly could, but this not answering, he was obliged to pause. Then he tried again, somewhat in another direction,—and the panel slipped back, discovering a passage which evidently ran by his room. At this moment the housemaid re-passed. And before he had given himself time for thought, Joe had scrambled out of bed straight into the passage, with no more consideration than to drag his trousers with him. He had his knife also. He rapidly slid back the panel that no one might find him, and, by the snap of a spring, he perceived that for good or for evil he was shut in between the walls of the castle. Any less dauntless boy would have been thoroughly terrified, but Joe only acknowledged to a wish that he had brought his shoes with him. His socks fortunately had come after him, entangled in his trousers; but socks, trousers, and night shirt are but a sorry covering inside a thick wall on a winter's morning, in the dark. However, there Joe was. And the next question was, what to do next? He felt for the spring, but it had shut too closely for him to discover it. Then he thought, should he shout for assistance? no, indeed, that he would not, if he could help it; time enough for that as a last resource. He tried to recollect carefully the direction of the walls, and the position of the rooms. He knew the passage ran by the dining-room, at least he thought so; certainly it did by the white chamber. Considering all things, he thought he could find his way, and he determined to proceed; so he felt along the wall, and moved on step by step. However, in a minute he was arrested by hearing his own door open, and Hannah enter. And soon he was in ecstasies of delight, stuffing his sock against his mouth, and shaking with silent laughter, at the horror and dismay she expressed when she found his bed empty.

“Gracious me!” ejaculated the poor woman, “Master Joseph’s gone! It never can be! Master Walter! Master Joe! Oh! my dear boy! Master Joseph! Joe! Joseph! Oh! wherever—can—he—be?” and Joseph guessed by the sounds that she was turning out and upsetting everything big enough to hide him.

“Perhaps Jane has called him—perhaps he’s gone down stairs: no,

here's his jacket and shoes, but I don't see his trousers. Has he opened the spring? I can't tell. I don't know where it is. I'll go and find Jane; oh, help me! whatever shall I do?" exclaimed poor Hannah as she hurried from the room.

The door shut sharply after her, and fearing lest she should soon return with some one who did know where the spring was, and could follow him, he proceeded at once on his way. Dark it was, cold it was, rough it was, but Joe's excitement and curiosity triumphed over all. Besides, how could he get back without help? and that he would not have asked for yet, at all, at all. So he stepped on. He stretched out both hands in front, as wide as the walls of the narrow passage would let him, that he might feel his way onward. His poor shoeless feet found the stone floor very cold indeed, and rather rough. And Joe was obliged to move slowly, for fear of stumbling down steps or holes in his way.

After a few minutes more of such creeping on, his left hand lost the wall. Joe wondered what had become of it; his geography was getting sadly confused, for his movements were almost too slow for him to measure distance by. He hesitated for a moment whether to feel after the wall or not. The fear struck him that he might get involved in a labyrinth of passages, and lose his way among the empty rooms, of which there were many in this old castle; perhaps he had better go back and thump at his own wall till somebody released him. But no! then somebody would be sent with him, and he should like to find old Sir Hugh's room by himself. He would feel after the wall. He did so, and soon traced it back again to the passage: it seemed to be only a recess in which a man might stand aside to let others pass; perhaps there might have been a door to conceal it effectually from the passers-by; but Joe could not wait to ascertain that. He crept on, feeling as before, and came upon more than one of these recesses, one of which was half shut by a stone partition, so that Joe felt he knew all about them, and was tired of them.

But Joe also passed more than one opening that could not be traced back—that was evidently a branch passage.

Presently he slipped down some stairs, not many, but it was a hard, disagreeable stumble, smothering him too with dust. And it cut his hands and bruised his feet, how much he could not tell in the dark; but he determined to walk on more cautiously. He picked himself up, and



stepped on. Soon he was startled by voices, Hannah's amongst them, lamenting loudly about him : she " was morally certain—as sure as if she had seen it—that the villainous Roundhead had spirited away Joe; and would return him a changeling, if he ever returned him at all, a horrible hateful child, who would be no more a de Brackenburgh than she was; who would change about, now be a cat, then an ape, then she knew not what, but spiteful and mischievous always! oh, dear! oh, dear!" and by a continued pit-pat upon the floor, Joe concluded that she was rocking herself in her chair backwards and forwards in her agony.

Then he heard Jane and the other servants pitying and sorrowing, and wondering whether Sir Hugh could find the missing map of the passages. Joe's amusement was far more awakened by all this than pity at their distress. He would not now ask for help when he had proceeded so far, and was no nearer losing himself than at first. He had only for an instant or two doubted emerging at last from his retreat, and that was when he had been once or twice thoroughly puzzled by the passages. Now he felt perfectly safe and fearless; though perhaps he was not sorry to perceive that he had not yet passed beyond the inhabited rooms.

Again he started on his travels, leaving Hannah and her woes behind him. Up and down short flights of steps; along passages, the length of which he could not measure, with many a turn and cross passage in them; he proceeded very slowly, feeling every step of the way. After a long while he began to get very much tired; the distance seemed interminable, nothing broke the silence or illumined the pitchy darkness. At length he found more steps, and began to ascend them. He climbed up twenty or more, then lost count, but went on till he struck his head against a ceiling, or roof of some sort. Very odd, thought he; what can be the meaning of this? there must have been a door, or something like it, somewhere! but though he felt all around as far as he could reach, he could make no impression on the hard walls. He began to get really frightened; supposing he could not find his way onwards, how could he possibly get back? He paused, just as he stood on the top of the ladder of steps, to think: he could not recollect which way he had come, he could not possibly trace it back to his room. For a moment he pictured to himself the misery of wandering about in those passages, and never getting out; oh! how the fear made him shiver! but by instinct Joe felt

that to dream of all this woe was the surest way to unnerve himself for escaping it. He must either manage to go on, or feel his way down the steps, and into some other passage. But he reflected that it was very unlikely these many steps led nowhere; and once more he tried the wall close round him. There was nothing but a ledge, about a foot wide, running along it out of his reach. He could not stand on this upright against the wall, so he made up his mind to descend, and try some other passage; but in descending he found a second ledge, just a little wider. By the two, perhaps, he might creep on a few steps; he could easily get back, and the ladder would not run away. He tried, passing carefully one foot across the other, and holding firmly on by the upper ledge. It *was* a giddy position to be in, sure enough; suppose him to slip, and where would he go? But after a few more steps it was almost worse to go back. He persevered and was rewarded, amply rewarded by reaching a platform, where he could stand securely without holding. Here he rested for a moment. Then he felt on again, nothing, nothing, anywhere! and across the platform he could almost straddle. Verily he was almost worse off than before; and chancing to exclaim at the puzzling nature of his resting-place, his voice sounded so awfully hollow and startling, that poor little Joe burst into tears. However, though they relieved him, it was of no use stopping to shed them, so he felt around again, and soon discovered similar ledges, upon which, driven to desperation, he did scramble on as before. Once he dislodged a stone, a very small one, but it fell down, down, down, knocking from side to side once or twice as it fell; telling him a terrible tale of a well, or hollow of some sort, into which he might follow the stone, if he did not mind what he was about. But he did take care, and he did hold on; and soon he arrived at another landing-place, broader than he could reach across, and protected by a door. Then the truth flashed upon him, that probably he had passed round half a cavity, crossed once by a plank or a bridge, which, of course, the occupant of the chamber, into which he thought he must have scrambled, could draw back, and thus defend himself against almost any number of assailants. Such a death, the being wounded and plunged down this hollow, would account for the disappearance of the Roundhead who pursued Sir Hugh; a conjecture subsequently proved correct by the discovery of a skeleton at the bottom, but the conjecture was not imagined by Joe.

Joe felt sure that he had found the cavalier's chamber; and of course, if he got in, he could find his way out, as Sir Hugh had done so. The possibility of ropes and chains having become rotten since that time never struck him; and as it turned out, there was no need that it should. He again felt about, pushing back cautiously and with difficulty the door by his side. There he touched something cold. Oh! ah! what was it? Down it fell with an echoing crash, that boomed in the silence and darkness most ominously. Joe dared not start back, but neither dared he advance. What was to be done next?

He paused several seconds; then, as no more noise came, he cautiously peeped round the door, not daring to touch it again though; and he saw—a ray of light! No words can describe his joy; he darted forward, regardless of all prudence, and soon found himself under a broad chimney with the daylight streaming down it, though the shaft was too high to allow of its streaming fully into the room. Joe looked about, and in one corner of the old hearth he found a steel glove, which he had the courage to drop, thus convincing himself that it was its fellow which had startled him behind the door by falling.

Now what was to be done next? Scarcely anything could he see but the very few articles on the hearth; an ancient staff, this old glove, the dust, and ashes, and *débris* gathered there, and the oaken settle just outside. Suddenly he thought that he might strike a light; and he wondered that he had not remembered this before. But remembering it before would not have helped him much, as he could have lit nothing but his own shirt, even if he had succeeded. Now he had this old staff. So he searched his trouser-pockets for the match or two which, despite of Hannah's warnings, were but too often to be found there, and by the aid of small pieces cut off the stick to catch more easily, he succeeded in setting one end of it alight.

It was a curious little chamber that he looked upon, with its deep fireplace, and its massive walls. He could see a table and a bed, but he dared not wait to look. His first object was to discover light and a means of exit. After a little search he found a window, which he opened; then he discovered another door, which opened upon a second vault, corresponding to the one that he had passed round on entering. But across this second a stone arch still remained, which he could venture to stand on; and before his torch had burned out, he had groped his way through the last passage to a well-concealed door.

This let him out on the leads of the castle, all among the chimneys and turrets, in one of which this chamber was placed.

So he had accomplished his task.

He tripped merrily back; at first shouting, then singing, until his voice did sound so weird and horrid, that he relapsed into silence. He recrossed the stone bridge, and re-entered the chamber. The window which he had opened was carefully concealed by a buttress from any observation from below, and consequently it gave but an imperfect light within—a light, that is to say, that would dawn late, and set early, and never be very brilliant; but at the time of day that Joe was there he could see well all that he wanted. The room was an octagon. An ancient oaken table stood in the centre, an oaken bedstead in one corner, upon which lay the powdery remains of dusty coverings, scarcely of bedclothes; and if it were possible to form any judgment by their position, they appeared as if thrown aside when the occupant last arose. A few articles of armour and dress lay about, such as were worn in the days of Charles I., an old rapier, a breastplate, the two steel gloves, a hat and plume, or rather the remains of one, scarcely distinguishable now. A small cupboard in the wall contained a few eating utensils, a platter, a mug, a small iron pot, and an old spoon.

Last, but not least, there was a wooden crucifix fixed against the wall, with a *very* ancient date carved under the figure. Joe took it down, and behind it he found an inscription rudely carved; but he was far too cold and too hungry to stop and decipher it then. He therefore determined to carry it away with him. He was indeed getting frightfully cold. For nearly two hours had he been wandering in those passages. Now he had done his work, and he wanted to get back to breakfast, and clothes, and warmth. But he thought it would be a pity quite to lose this fine opportunity of personating the Round-head, and scaring Hannah just a little. He longed for his clothes, then he would have done it well; now he could not stay for more than a little fright. But how to attract her attention?

He burst out on the leads with a shriek of joyful exultation, which at least amazed the old rooks and jackdaws, in among the chimneys and places, and sent them wheeling round and round in the air. But the cold! oh, the cold, how piercing it was! Really, Hannah must be quick and hear him, or he could not stay—the very leads were freezing him. He shrieked again—not quite so joyfully as he had

done at first—and again Hannah heard it, as she had heard the first, plainly enough, poor soul! She hid her face in her apron and cowered behind the kitchen door. She had fled from the loneliness of the housekeeper's room.

"That *nasty* old Roundhead!" thought she.

Again came the shriek, piercing and quivering, for Joe was desperately cold. "Oh!" trembled poor old Hannah.

"Sure now," exclaimed Duncombe, the coachman, who had also sought refuge in company, "that scream may be Master Joseph himself."

"No, never," sobbed Hannah, "he's gone, or changed for ever and ever!"

"Now, Mrs. Pettisworthy," suggested the man, "go and see! Do'ee go and see; it very likely may be Master Joseph," and Duncombe crept closer to the fire.

"Who? I!" said she; "go yourself, if ye want to see."

"Ay! but you see Master Joe don't know me as he knows you. He wouldn't be afeard of you."

"Oh, I dare say! mercy! there it is again! Now I say, do, Thomas Duncombe, go and see; you owe to your master's grandson to help him in a difficul—Oh, there!—what a voice the thing has! oh, what shall we do! now *do*, Thomas; I should be ashamed to sit there, on top of the fire, if I were a man like *you*."

"Just as soon as be under mine own pinafore like *you*," retorted Tom, driven out of all good manners by fear; in a minute he added, "I'll go and fetch the master, that's what I'll do."

"Oh! do mind the spring in the back passage then; maybe the old fellow 'll get you too! and if two of ye get schreeling on that roof, I shall go clean mazed, I shall indeed," declared poor Hannah.

Duncombe departed, leaving Hannah alone, listening in an agony of terror for the shriek; but she heard it no more. Joe could not endure the cold any longer, and dashing down some dilapidated stairs, in an old round tower, at the end of the leads, he had fled across the frozen yard, and was now approaching the kitchen door as fast as his shaking limbs would let him.

Who shall express the utter terror of the poor old housekeeper, when he bounced unexpectedly against it, dashed it open, and himself appeared, all begrimed with dirt, and blue with cold? Fortunately for Hannah's wits, her master appeared at one door, led by Duncombe, as Joe sprang in at the other; and not being so possessed with a belief in

the family tradition as was Hannah, he was able to recognise his grandson in the shivering, dirty little urchin before him. His first care was to warm and feed the boy, then get him to bed—an operation performed by Hannah, now herself again, in the presence of Sir Hugh and Lady de Brackenburgh. Whilst it was in progress, Joe gave a full and particular account of his adventures. His grandfather congratulated him heartily on the discovery he had made, and at his pluck and high courage, suggesting that he should on another day conduct himself, and some men with them, through the passages. Sir Hugh had good reason to request this, for the two hours of the boy's absence had been hours of agony to him. One of the only two documents existing that gave any clue to the hiding-places was at his lawyer's in Brantham; the other, supposed to be kept by himself, was hopelessly mislaid; all the time had been expended in hunting for the one, and sending for the other. The exact position of the springs too, though every one knew in what rooms they were, no one could in that hurry discover. The distress, therefore, of the grandparents may well be imagined, and Sir Hugh insisted, as soon as Joe could accompany him, in tracing out all the labyrinth in which the boy had been wandering, and, above all, on examining the cavalier's chamber, and the vaults near it. It was curious, but Joe found it impossible to follow again the course he had pursued by himself. He led Sir Hugh from the oriel chamber, but he soon entirely lost his way; and the position of the searchers might have become awkward, if one of the men had not taken the precaution to tie the end of a ball of twine in Joe's room, and unwind it as they advanced. They did at last complete their survey; but it was discovered that only in certain places were the passages actually in the walls. Many had once been open, and in use; and were reopened by Sir Hugh. Some led to the roof, by the turrets. All were, however, rendered light and safe, so that no such risk as little Joe had incurred could be run by any future wanderer. Sir Hugh told his wife, in confidence, that if the little lad had not been one of the steadiest and most daring that ever lived, he must have been very seriously hurt, if not quite disabled, in the hazardous places he got into.

During the search around the cavalier's room, the skeleton, already spoken of, was found in the first vault. It was borne away and decently buried; so that poor old Hannah slept, for the future, free from all dread of Roundhead visitations! The probable use made of the ledges was also rendered apparent (the ledges themselves being

courses in the walls) by the discovery of sundry planks, which seemed once to have served as bridges, both across the Roundhead's vault and by the stone ladder. One such plank had fallen into the vault. As nearly as could be ascertained, by dates remaining in the family, Sir Hugh's final escape from the castle took place about the time of this soldier's death. Probably it was the death, and the horror accompanying it, and also that the falling of the plank cut off the old Royalist from his supplies, that drove him away. His chamber was left unclosed, and as much as possible unaltered. But the vaults were filled in, and the approaches to it made safe. The crucifix was restored to its place, and everything else that could be retained left as Joe had found it.

One fact touched our Sir Hugh deeply. The inscription behind this crucifix was signed by the letters H de B. It was very rudely carved and difficult to read, but when deciphered it ran thus:—"Father! forgive my dear erring boy, sorely doth he need it!" It was touching—deeply touching—that after two hundred years of silence this prayer of love and forgiveness should be brought to light; the only words recorded of the old cavalier, save those of wrath and provocation, when he first discovered his son's power to oppose him. They deeply affected the present baronet. What had James done against him, compared to the real cruelty of that rebellious son, that he should refuse him his pardon?

The letter that left England, about a fortnight after little Joe's arrival, was a very different one from what would have been written had the old cavalier's crucifix never been found. It astonished James, and it may be hoped did more than any severity could have done to cure him of his "contrariness," as Hannah called it.

It will easily be believed how great a hero Walter Joseph became among the servants and country people after his adventure in the wall. In about a year afterwards James and his family returned to make the castle their home; and very general was the satisfaction in the whole family, when it was made known that James had gratefully consented to his father's first expressed wish after his arrival, "that that gallant little lad should be always called Walter, and should be the one to restore the old name to its ancient place in the pedigree and affection of the de Brackenburghs."

MOTHER CAREY.